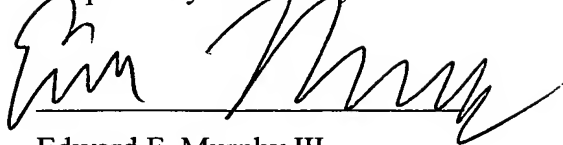


REMARKS

Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as being anticipated by Arai. Applicants have amended claim 1 to distinctly claim and define the invention. Amended claim 1 and its added new dependent claims 13-21 are not anticipated or obviated by Arai. Arai discloses a hydraulic shock absorber for a ground vehicle with a hydraulic fluid piston shock absorber 1 and an air spring chamber 7, with a vehicle level sensor 12. The vehicle level sensor 12 is comprised of a rod 13 containing three reed switches 14A-C which are activated when approaching a permanent magnet 17. The rod 13 and permanent magnet 17 are positioned and designed such that the reed switches are activated when proximate the permanent magnet while inhibiting contact between the rod 13 and the permanent magnet 17. The permanent magnet 17 does not attract the rod 13 into contact with the permanent magnet to dampen and control the relative motion between the magnet 17 and the rod 13. Independent claim 1 as amended is not anticipated or suggested by Arai.

Applicants respectfully request allowance of independent claim 1 and its new dependent claims 13-21.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Murphy', written over a horizontal line.

Edward F. Murphy III

Attorney for Applicant

Reg. No. 38,251

919-468-5979 ext. 6205

Lord Corporation

111 Lord Drive

Cary, North Carolina 27502